

0810

WORK PROGRAM PROCEDURES

0810.05

ASSESSMENT

REV:01/2002

The assessment of family circumstances and employability for applicants and recipients is conducted by Family Independence Program case workers.

The assessment process begins with the Family Independence case worker collecting information about the participant's past educational, training, and employment history as well as the health of the participant and her/his family. These and other factors provide a client profile which the agency representative evaluates and from which s/he can estimate the employment potential of the individual. This collection of data is appraised to identify the individual's strengths in relation to the individual's readiness for employment. The purpose of the appraisal is to gauge the overall likelihood of the completion and success in a given component/activity and achievement of what specific employment goal is realistically possible in the shortest possible time given the overall family circumstances.

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Assessment Requirements

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In order to gather information with which to evaluate a parent's employability, an assessment interview must be conducted which covers areas relating to the applicant's and the entire family's circumstances, including, but not limited to the following:

- * Housing;
- * Utilities;
- * Food;
- * Physical and emotional health (including special issues affecting the well-being of the family such as substance abuse and domestic violence);
- * Child issues, relationships;
- * Adult relationships;
- * Education;
- * Employment;
- * Level of crisis;
- * Motivation; and
- * Coping skills, insight.

The initial assessment is completed for minor parents and pregnant minors by the ASSC case managers in individual interviews. Other applicants undergo a family needs assessment and an employability assessment for each parent.

At the beginning of the assessment process, the Information on the Family Violence Option (Form WVR-1a) is given and the FIP case worker should give a brief summary of its contents in case the individual cannot read. Every recipient must be informed that s/he may be excused from certain FIP requirements under the Family Violence Option if meeting these requirements puts the recipient or her or his children at risk of domestic violence and that s/he may claim the Family Violence Option at any time. The procedures to be followed after an applicant claims this option or discloses abuse are specified in Section 0814.10.

Specific assessment information needed includes the individual's ability to speak English, and if not, the individual's primary language, marital status, military veteran status, employment status, last grade of school completed, as well as each family member's school attended, as appropriate, current health problems, names of educational facilities attended by the participant: program/course titles and completion dates, names and addresses of the participant's previous employers, job titles, and hire and end dates.

The FIP case worker must also assess the financial conditions of the family and develop a financial plan. See Section 0810.10 pertaining to the financial plan.

As appropriate, the FIP case worker discusses the various special requirements for minor parents and pregnant minors, and for all adolescent parents who do not have their high school diploma or its equivalent and who are not attending school, the requirement for participation in an educational program leading to such diploma, as well as other Family Independence requirements. The Family Independence Program Information for Teen Parents sheet which summarizes these requirements is reviewed with and given to the recipient, as appropriate, during the assessment process.

For all adult parents, the FIP case worker informs each individual of the work activity requirements as well as the sixty (60) month lifetime time limit for adults for receipt of benefits from the Family Independence Program. The FIP case worker reviews the Family Independence Program Information sheet which describes the welfare to work process by outlining the sequence of the eligibility process and other compliance matters, activity requirements, the participant's as well as the Department's responsibilities, and the consequences if the individual fails to comply with program requirements.

Assessment initiates the process of developing the individual's Family Services and Support/Employment Plan. The plan must contain the short and long term career objectives of the recipient, must take into consideration the (1) the physical capacity, skills, education, work experience, health and safety and family responsibilities, and place of residence of the individual; (2) local employment opportunities; and (3) the child care and supportive services required by and actually available to the recipient in order to avail herself or himself of employment opportunities and/or work readiness programs. The plan shall include a strategy for immediate employment, as appropriate, and/or for preparing for, finding, and retaining employment consistent, to the extent practicable, with the individual's career objectives.

The Employment Plan is developed from the data gathered during assessment; the plan outlines a systematic process to be followed by the individual in order to attain a specific employment goal within the shortest time frame that is practicable.

0810.05.10 Assessment Recording

REV:01/2002

The agency representative enters the assessment information in the panels of the ASMT (Assessment) function of INRHODES. The first four ASMT panels comprise Level I Assessment. The ASMT function is used for both applicants and recipients; it should be periodically updated by appropriate agency representatives after Intake to record new assessment information.

During the assessment, the FIP case worker annotates in the Level I Assessment Participant Profile screen whether the individual speaks English, and if not, the person's primary language. The Family Independence case worker also determines and annotates the marital status of the participant, whether or not s/he is a military veteran, current employment status, and the last grade of school completed.

After the FIP case worker reviews with the individual her/his family circumstances, including the needs of the individual's child(ren); the case worker enters for each family member, as appropriate, the school attended, as appropriate, and any current health problems.

The Level I Assessment Family Composition screen reproduces certain household member information from the participant's IV-A STAT (Statement of Need) in INRHODES. When an applicant is not known to INRHODES, there is no corresponding STAT, i.e., no member information to display; the next Assessment panel displayed is the participant Level I Assessment Education History screen. The Family Independence program worker must wait to enter information in the Family Composition panel until after the STAT is entered; however, s/he should record the appropriate information in the CNAR (Case Narrative) in the TOOL function of INRHODES.

In the Level I Assessment Education History screen, all educational facilities attended by the participant, program/course titles, and completion dates are entered; similarly, the worker lists in the Level I Assessment Employment History panel the names and addresses of the participant's previous employers, job titles, and hire and end dates.

A summary of the assessment interview with the participant and any appropriate information must be entered in the Case Narrative (CNAR).

There are two (2) levels of assessment: Level I and Level II.

Level I assessment is completed for all Family Independence program participants. Certain participants must undergo a Level II Assessment when required for specific components (e.g., Community Work Experience, Skills Training, and Post-secondary Education). Level II and/or literacy testing, as appropriate, may be determined necessary to establish reading, mathematics, and skill levels.

In Level II Assessment or to determine an individual's literacy level, a participant is referred by the agency representative for formal testing with a testing services provider. After the test results have been returned, the agency representative conducts an in-depth interview with the individual in which the results are discussed and evaluated in light of her/his previous education, training, and employment history. The focus of the interview is to gauge the overall likelihood of the completion and success in a given component/activity and whether achievement of the employment goal is realistically possible. The testing information is recorded in the Level II Assessment panel, i.e., the fifth panel of the ASMT function of INRHODES, and the results are filed in the case record. A summary of each contact with the participant and any appropriate information is recorded in the CNAR (Case Narrative) in the TOOL function of INRHODES.

0810.10 FINANCIAL PLAN

REV:05/1997

The financial plan shall identify all available sources of income and all benefits and services available to the family from state government, local government, from the federal government, and from social service agencies. Sources of income may include: earnings from employment, including self-employment, the earned income tax credit, advance payment of the earned income tax credit, social security, unemployment compensation, temporary disability insurance, supplemental security income assistance, and payment of support obligations by noncustodial parents.

Benefits may include: food stamps, school lunch, housing assistance, home heating assistance, as well as cash assistance under the Family Independence program.

The plan shall upon the family's request include an annual and monthly cash family budget detailing expenditures (required and possible in the view of these available resources) for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, work expenses (including child care and transportation), health care, personal care, and household supplies.

0810.15 EMPLOYMENT PLAN

REV:01/2002

An Employment Plan is developed by a FIP case worker in conjunction with each parent. The plan is derived from the employability assessment of the parent. The employment plan shall identify realistic short and long term career objectives.

It must take into consideration the physical capacity, skills, education, work experience, health and safety and family responsibilities, and place of residence of the individual; local employment opportunities; child care and supportive services required by and available to the applicant to avail himself or herself of employment opportunities and/or work readiness programs. The plan shall include a strategy for immediate employment and for preparing for, finding, and retaining employment consistent, to the extent practical, with the individual's career objectives. It must also take into consideration the sixty (60) month time limit for the parent's receipt of cash assistance from the Family Independence program.

The Family Services and Support/Employment Plan is established and signed at the end of the assessment. The plan is developed jointly by the FIP case worker and client who has a completed assessment. In their discussion, the case worker and client identify barriers to employment; strategies and dates for resolving them are then devised. If medical or other specific information is sought, a release of information form, DHS-25, is signed by the parent authorizing the agency to obtain that information.

The agency representative describes the programs and activities available to the parent. This information is obtained from current reports and publications from the Department of Labor and Training and other sources pertaining to training and employment.

The parent is also provided with information regarding the availability of supportive services; the worker assists the family in obtaining those services needed to participate and authorizes them when appropriate and necessary.

The specific employment goal of the employment plan should be one which is feasible; the goal must be attainable in the shortest time period consistent with the parent's skills level and interests as well as the months remaining in the parent's sixty (60)

month lifetime time limit, available program resources, the parent's supportive service(s) needs, local employment opportunities, and to the maximum extent possible, the preferences of the parent.

The worker records a summary of each contact or interview in the CNAR (Case Narrative) section of the TOOL function of INRHODES; if employer or component provider contacts are made telephonically, the dates and appropriate information obtained are recorded in the on-line Narrative as documentation.

Discrepancies in case information discovered during interviews and contacts must be forwarded to appropriate eligibility staff via the Information Transfer (D206) selection in the TOOL function of INRHODES.

The employment plan identifies the steps: education, job training, employment search, part-time work and full-time work that the recipient will follow to become financially self-sufficient within the shortest practicable time. In INRHODES, the employment activity schedule is entered and maintained; it contains the details of each work/training activity, the beginning and anticipated end dates of each program/activity, and the scheduled days and hours of attendance, and authorization of supportive services.

When the employment plan activity is a component activity with a specific time-limited program, the parent must obtain and provide written verification of acceptance into the program, as well as a program schedule before the employment activity schedule is finalized.

In order for an employment activity to be approved, the total scheduled hours of the component(s) must be twenty (20) or more hours per week unless the activity is participation on a full-time basis (as defined by the institution) in an educational component activity as outlined in Sections 0812.10.05.

The FIP case worker lists in the employment activity schedule the supportive services determined necessary for participation and which are to be authorized.

The parent is advised of her/his responsibility to report within ten (10) days of any change in the family's circumstances as outlined in Section 0808.30. Whenever an employment plan contains an education or training component, the worker must explain to the parent the attendance requirements and the concept of "successful participation". Attendance of all the scheduled hours is required. Successful participation in an education or training activity means that the parent is meeting a consistent standard of progress toward the completion of the education or training activity. This standard must include a qualitative measure of progress such as a grade point average and a quantitative measure such as a reasonable time limit for completion of an education or training program. (See Section 0812.25.)

The completed employment activity schedule must be approved by the agency representative before any supportive services can be authorized. When a FIP case worker denies an individual's employment activity, a notice specifying the reasons for the denial must be issued. The notice must also include information regarding conciliation and the parent's appeal rights.